

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 14, 2013

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 13, 2013

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 6, 2013

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 10, 2013

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 140**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Dickinson  
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Gatto)**

January 17, 2013

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An act to add Section 86 to the Probate Code, and to amend Section 15610.30 of, and to add Section 15610.70 to, the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to undue influence.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 140, as amended, Dickinson. Undue influence.

Existing law provides that financial abuse of an elder or dependent adult occurs when, among other instances, a person or entity takes, secretes, appropriates, obtains, or retains, or assists in taking, secreting, appropriating, obtaining, or retaining, real or personal property of an elder or dependent adult by undue influence, as defined.

Existing law makes failing to report, or impeding or inhibiting a report of, among other things, financial abuse of an elder or dependent adult, in violation of certain reporting requirements a misdemeanor. Existing law also makes it a misdemeanor for any caretaker of an elder or dependent adult to violate any provision of law proscribing theft or embezzlement, with respect to the property of that elder or dependent adult.

This bill would change the definition of undue influence to mean excessive persuasion that causes another person to act or refrain from acting and results in inequity. The bill would require, in determining whether the result was produced by undue influence, the vulnerability of the victim, the influencer’s ~~apparent authority and whether the influencer knew or should have known of the victim’s vulnerability,~~ *authority*, the actions or tactics used by the influencer, and the equity of the result to be considered. The bill would specify that ~~nothing in these provisions be construed to imply that an inequitable result, without more, will constitute undue influence or excessive persuasion.~~ *is not sufficient to prove undue influence.*

By changing the definition of a crime, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

Existing law prohibits the use of undue influence and establishes protections for individuals unable to resist undue influence in various areas of the law, including wills, trusts, and conservatorships.

This bill would define undue influence for those purposes without superseding or interfering with the common law of undue influence.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement. This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 86 is added to the Probate Code, to read:
- 2 86. “Undue influence” has the same meaning as defined in
- 3 Section 15610.70 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. It is the
- 4 intent of the Legislature that this section supplement the common
- 5 law meaning of undue influence without superseding or interfering
- 6 with the operation of that law.
- 7 SEC. 2. Section 15610.30 of the Welfare and Institutions Code
- 8 is amended to read:
- 9 15610.30. (a) “Financial abuse” of an elder or dependent adult
- 10 occurs when a person or entity does any of the following:

1 (1) Takes, secretes, appropriates, obtains, or retains real or  
2 personal property of an elder or dependent adult for a wrongful  
3 use or with intent to defraud, or both.

4 (2) Assists in taking, secreting, appropriating, obtaining, or  
5 retaining real or personal property of an elder or dependent adult  
6 for a wrongful use or with intent to defraud, or both.

7 (3) Takes, secretes, appropriates, obtains, or retains, or assists  
8 in taking, secreting, appropriating, obtaining, or retaining, real or  
9 personal property of an elder or dependent adult by undue  
10 influence, as defined in Section 15610.70.

11 (b) A person or entity shall be deemed to have taken, secreted,  
12 appropriated, obtained, or retained property for a wrongful use if,  
13 among other things, the person or entity takes, secretes,  
14 appropriates, obtains, or retains the property and the person or  
15 entity knew or should have known that this conduct is likely to be  
16 harmful to the elder or dependent adult.

17 (c) For purposes of this section, a person or entity takes, secretes,  
18 appropriates, obtains, or retains real or personal property when an  
19 elder or dependent adult is deprived of any property right, including  
20 by means of an agreement, donative transfer, or testamentary  
21 bequest, regardless of whether the property is held directly or by  
22 a representative of an elder or dependent adult.

23 (d) For purposes of this section, “representative” means a person  
24 or entity that is either of the following:

25 (1) A conservator, trustee, or other representative of the estate  
26 of an elder or dependent adult.

27 (2) An attorney-in-fact of an elder or dependent adult who acts  
28 within the authority of the power of attorney.

29 SEC. 3. Section 15610.70 is added to the Welfare and  
30 Institutions Code, to read:

31 15610.70. (a) “Undue influence” means excessive persuasion  
32 that causes another person to act or refrain from acting and results  
33 in inequity. In determining whether a result was produced by undue  
34 influence, all of the following shall be considered:

35 (1) The vulnerability of the ~~victim, including,~~ *victim. Evidence*  
36 *of vulnerability may include, but is not limited to, incapacity,*  
37 *illness, disability, injury, age, education, impaired cognitive*  
38 *function, emotional distress, isolation, or ~~dependency.~~ dependency,*  
39 *and whether the influencer knew or should have known of the*  
40 *alleged victim’s vulnerability.*

1 (2) The influencer's apparent ~~authority, including,~~ *authority.*  
 2 *Evidence of apparent authority may include,* but is not limited to,  
 3 status as a fiduciary, family member, care provider, health care  
 4 professional, legal professional, spiritual adviser, expert, or other  
 5 ~~qualification, and whether the influencer knew or should have~~  
 6 ~~known of the victim's vulnerability.~~ *qualification.*

7 (3) The actions or tactics used by the ~~influencer, including,~~  
 8 *influencer. Evidence of actions or tactics used may include,* but is  
 9 not limited to, ~~controlling necessities,~~ *all of the following:*

10 (A) *Controlling necessities of life,* medication, the victim's  
 11 interactions with others, ~~or~~ access to information, ~~sleep~~  
 12 ~~deprivation,~~ *use or sleep.*

13 (B) *Use of affection, intimidation, or* ~~coercion,~~ *initiation*  
 14 *coercion.*

15 (C) *Initiation of changes in personal or property rights, use of*  
 16 *haste or secrecy in effecting those changes, effecting changes at*  
 17 *inappropriate times and places,* ~~or~~ *and claims of expertise in*  
 18 *effecting changes.*

19 (4) The equity of the ~~result, including,~~ *result. Evidence of the*  
 20 *equity of the result may include,* but is not limited to, the economic  
 21 consequences to the victim, any divergence from the victim's prior  
 22 intent or course of conduct or dealing, the relationship of the value  
 23 conveyed to the value of any services or consideration received,  
 24 or the appropriateness of the change in light of the length and  
 25 nature of the relationship.

26 (b) ~~This section shall not be construed to imply that Evidence~~  
 27 ~~of an inequitable result, without more, establishes the element of~~  
 28 ~~undue influence or excessive persuasion. is not sufficient to prove~~  
 29 ~~undue influence.~~

30 SEC. 4. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to  
 31 Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because  
 32 the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school  
 33 district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or  
 34 infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty  
 35 for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of  
 36 the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within  
 37 the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California  
 38 Constitution.

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